

Elementary Sikh Lesson Plan

Taken from <http://www.khalsakids.org/teachers.php>

Materials

-  Commercial “Why Do You Wear The Turban”
http://www.khalsakids.org/yntoo_02.php
-  Transparency of Articles of Faith page
-  Transparency of styles of turbans page
-  White paper, one per student
-  Crayons

Icebreaker/Opening Activity

Tell the class they are going to learn about a particular religion called ‘Sikhism’ today. Draw a turban on the board. Have students raise their hands to guess what this object is. When someone guesses, “turban”, (if not, you can guide them to the right answer) ask the class if they have ever seen anyone wear a turban. Then show them the commercial ‘Why Do You Wear The Turban’. You can show the commercial a few times since it is so short. Ask the class to remind you of the various responses to the question “why do you wear a turban?” List these responses on the board. Engage the class in a discussion about why they think these boys/girls would respond this way about their turban.

Lesson

1. Tell the class:
 - Wearing a turban and keeping long hair is mandatory for followers of the religion Sikhism.
 - This is the 5th largest world religion, and that there are close to 21 million Sikhs in the world today.
 - Sikhs believe in one God and try to live their life by three things: remembering God and being honest, doing good deeds, and sharing with others.
 - Initiated Sikhs also wear 5 articles of faith: kara, kirpan, kesh, kanga, and kachera. (These articles and their description can be found on the following page.)
2. Pick one volunteer from the class, and have him/her stand in the front of the room. Encourage the students to raise their hands and point out every thing that the volunteer is wearing. Tell the students that “just like this student wears a shirt, pants, shoes, etc. everyday, this is how Sikhs feel about their articles of faith. It’s a part of their everyday uniform, and each article represents one part of their personality that they should always remember. This entire uniform represents who a Sikh is. A Sikh does not call himself/herself a Sikh just because he/she wears a turban or keeps their hair long. It is also because he/she is a honest person, remembers God on a daily basis, etc.”

3. Hand out a plain sheet of paper to the class. Ask them to draw a figure of a man or a woman, and show the transparency of the articles of faith and the different turban styles. Ask the students to pick a turban and draw one type of turban on their figure. Hand out crayons/markers to the class, and ask them to draw the other four articles of faith on their figures.
4. Go over the transparency with the students, and explain the significance of all the articles. If you need more information on what these articles represent, you can access the Sikh Coalition's website at <http://www.sikhcoalition.org/SikhismArticles.asp>.

Assessment

You can play a short activity with the class as an informal assessment. Narrow down the significance of each of the articles of faith to one word. See below:

Kara – strength

Kirpan – protection

Kesh – spirituality

Kanga – cleanliness/good grooming

Kachera – self discipline

Ask the students to memorize the quality associated with each article. Then create hand gestures that correspond with each article. For example:

Kara – touch your wrist

Kirpan – act like you are holding a sword

Kesh – touch your hair

Kanga – act like you are combing your hair

Kachera – stand up and touch your knees

Then quiz the students by first saying the name of the article, and asking them to show the appropriate hand gesture. Once they have mastered the name of the article with the hand gesture, you can extend the activity. Now say the personality trait, and have them show the appropriate hand gesture with the article of faith that the personality trait represents. This is a fun game that tests students on how well they understand the articles of faith and what they represent.

**Please use the 'Links' and 'Explaining Sikhism' pages to supplement this lesson.

The 5 "Ks"



Iron Bracelet (Kara)
GOOD DEEDS



Sword (Kirpan)
PROTECTION

Long Underpants (Kachera)
SELF DISCIPLINE



Uncut Hair (Kesh)
SPIRITUALITY



Comb (Kanga)
CLEANLINESS

